



2008 VCE VET Hospitality Food and Beverage GA 2: Written examination

The VCE VET Hospitality (Operations) Food and Beverage examination is based on the following three units of competence:

- THHBFB03B Provide food and beverage service
- THHBFB10b Prepare and serve non-alcoholic beverages
- THHBFB02B Provide a link between kitchen and service areas.

Students sitting the 2008 VCE VET Hospitality (Operations) Food and Beverage examination scored slightly higher than those in 2007, with a mean of 56 per cent compared to 54 per cent in 2007.

Students should be congratulated for completing the whole examination paper and for making every effort to attempt all questions. This year there was considerable improvement in the amount of information students included in their responses. It was evident that many students had noted that one or two word answers are generally insufficient and when clear specific explanations are given, they are more likely to be rewarded with higher scores. For Section B, Question 3, appropriate examples of professional service from a waiter included examples that indicated a thorough knowledge of specific tasks carried out by the waiter. For example, that cutlery is corrected according to the menu items selected, and sides/accompaniments are placed on the table with the appropriate serving utensils. However, responses such as 'know where everything should be placed' and 'clear plates and glasses correctly' did not score marks.

It was pleasing to see that many students scored better than in previous years on questions examining THHBFB10B Prepare and serve non-alcoholic beverages, although knowledge of the preparation requirements for quality coffee and tea still needs improvement. Most students scored well on questions relating to typical food and beverage service styles, sequence of service and types of menus used in different hospitality contexts. However, students lacked understanding of procedures associated with clearing the table and end of service procedures, particularly in Section B, Questions 12, 13, 15, 16a. and 16b.

It was disappointing to find that some students did not demonstrate sound knowledge and understanding of cutlery requirements for menu items or cutlery positioning when setting the table (Section A, Question 9 and Section B, Question 10). These are basic skills in the hospitality industry and it is expected that students can competently set cutlery for a range of different menu items and menu types. It is also expected that students have an understanding of common food intolerances and food allergies and the associated foods that need to be avoided (Section A, Question 22). An important role of the waiter is to assist guests to select a suitable meal for their dietary requirements. Professional industry practice demands that waiters have good knowledge and understanding of special dietary requirements that support the guest. This then supports both the establishment and the kitchen staff.

This year students did not score well on questions relating to THHBFB02B Provide a link between kitchen and service areas (Section A, Question 15 and Section B, Questions 11 and 17). Students need to develop a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the food runner and other members of the food service team to ensure complete service is provided in accordance with established systems and procedures.

Students did not score well on several questions with a strong customer focus that required knowledge of typical industry situations and with different client groups (Section B, Questions 14 and 18). Students should have the skills and knowledge to support the needs of different client groups at different service periods.



Section A – Multiple-choice questions

The table below indicates the percentage of students who chose each option. The correct answer is indicated by shading.

Question	% A	% B	% C	% D	% No Answer	Comments
1	3	86	2	9	0	
2	90	4	1	4	0	
3	3	20	12	65	0	
4	3	94	1	2	0	
5	17	18	14	51	0	Option D was the correct response. Canapés are the first items served in any menu style. While canapés and soups can be entrées, canapés are served first if soups or other entrées are also ordered. Petite fours (option A) was a distractor.
6	7	74	3	16	0	
7	20	67	3	9	0	
8	66	20	4	10	0	
9	9	59	20	11	0	
10	69	4	24	3	0	
11	6	4	0	89	0	
12	2	75	18	4	0	
13	2	0	98	1	0	
14	1	3	80	16	0	
15	42	10	27	21	0	Option A was the correct response. Salads are typically collected from the larder section of the kitchen, which is a cold food production area. Pasta and hot main course items are served from the hot food preparation and service area or pass (under hot lights). Extra plates and service gear are not food items.
16	7	13	1	78	0	
17	19	69	11	0	0	
18	71	10	11	9	0	
19	2	8	90	0	0	
20	4	13	80	3	0	
21	75	18	4	2	0	
22	11	47	23	17	1	Option B was the only correct answer as it does not include any ingredients containing gluten. All other options included gluten – chicken parmigiana (option A) is chicken coated in wheat breadcrumbs, tempura vegetables (option C) are dipped in a wheat-based batter and cannelloni (option D) is made from durum wheat.
23	95	1	3	0	0	
24	1	3	91	4	0	
25	64	25	1	10	0	Option B was the correct response. A lassi is a refreshing drink made from blended yoghurt, water and fruit and/or spices. A smoothie (option A) is a beverage of blended fruit mixed with milk and honey, a milkshake (option C) is a beverage of blended milk, flavouring syrup and ice cream. A laksa (option D) is a spicy seafood noodle soup.
26	1	1	2	95	0	
27	1	9	2	88	0	

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Question	% A	% B	% C	% D	% No Answer	Comments
28	5	81	13	1	0	
29	7	10	73	10	0	
30	31	54	11	4	0	

Section B – Short answer questions

For each question, an outline answer (or answers) is provided. In some cases the answer given is not the only answer that could have been awarded marks.

Question 1

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	Average
%	0	0	1	7	57	34	4.3

- day and/or date
- time of arrival
- name of booking
- number of guests
- location
- any special requirements, including seating arrangements or dietary requirements

Students generally responded well to this question. Confirming the phone number or the style of menu were not considered appropriate responses.

Question 2

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	2	8	30	49	11	2.6

Four of:

- acknowledge and greet the guests
- enquire as to whether they have a booking
- check the host's name when confirming the reservation and address the host by their title and name
- confirm any special needs and the number of guests
- assist with hats and coats.

This question required students to identify the tasks required **before** escorting guests to the table. No marks were given to responses that involved showing guests to the table or providing or explaining the menu.

Question 3

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Average
%	3	5	12	18	21	20	12	6	2	4.1

Order taking

- provide information about food items when asked by the guest and answer the guest's questions competently
- take the guest's food and beverage order accurately and note special requirements
- offer beverage menu suggestions
- take wine orders correctly

Table service of food and beverages

- cutlery is corrected according to the menu items selected
- food and beverages are served in an appropriate time frame
- foods are checked for quality/suitability and special requirements as requested
- food is served to the correct guest/cover
- plated foods/beverages are placed in front of the guest carefully/without spillage
- side orders are placed on the table with the appropriate serving utensils
- sides/accompaniments are placed on the table in an appropriate time frame
- ground pepper is offered
- additional drink orders are taken or drinks are topped up when required

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- an ice bucket is provided for white wines
- menu items and beverages are handled appropriately (glasses are held at the stem and/or base) and placed at the correct position on the table
- service is from the right

Clearing food and beverages

- plates are cleared soon after all guests have finished eating/check that the guest has finished eating
- waiters check on the quality/suitability of food*
- clearing is completed without spills or dropping of items
- all unnecessary items on the table are cleared promptly
- tables are crumbed down politely without interference to guests
- use the two or three-plate clearing technique to clear plates
- clear plates in a consistent direction
- clear empty glasses with a drink tray
- clear glassware as guests finish their beverages

End of service

- the bill is prepared accurately and presented promptly on request
- advise the guests of payment procedures
- any inaccuracies should be dealt with quickly
- the bill is processed promptly
- have coats ready when guests indicate they are leaving/offer assistance with coats
- the waiter farewells/thanks guests for their patronage when leaving/receiving feedback

*This response was only allowed once within the whole question.

Responses to this question needed to demonstrate knowledge of different actions undertaken by the professional waiter when performing the above service tasks. Where two examples provided were identical service tasks, only one mark was scored. Giving suggestions and information about specials of the day was not accepted as professional service performed when order taking as these tasks are carried out when menus are initially given to guests. Speaking or acting politely was not considered an acceptable response as this is normal behaviour expected at all times by all hospitality staff.

Some students included responses that were relevant answers but were not included under the specific service task heading. Marks cannot be awarded when this occurs.

Question 4

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	4	11	56	29	2.1

Three of:

- it minimises errors in interpreting menu items
- it is quicker to write the order
- it is clearer to read information/easier to understand
- more efficient use of docket space.

Students generally scored well on this question.

Question 5

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	15	2	17	6	27	10	24	3.5

To score well on this question, students needed to provide three different duties/tasks carried out by waiters and explain how the tasks would differ when working in a busy à la carte restaurant as opposed to a wedding reception centre. Examples of suitable duties/tasks included those related to table setting, seating guests, providing menus, food or beverage ordering, food and beverage service, preparing the bill, and individual responsibilities versus group work. The explanation of how the task was undertaken in the different settings needed to be clear. Students who followed the instructions given usually scored well.

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Question 6

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	4	10	31	37	19	2.6

Four of:

- clean up spills and/or breakages immediately
- use clear communication in congested areas
- be aware of surroundings, focused on task, work at a safe pace
- report any damaged or dangerous situations immediately
- prevent over-stacking of trays/glasses/plates/ensure there is an appropriate weight load for the waiter
- use equipment according to enterprise standards or the manufacturer's requirements/use of waiters' cloths to prevent accidents/use the appropriate method of handling equipment
- wear appropriate footwear
- use the correct posture when serving food and beverages (bend knees).

Students scored reasonably well on this question. Responses that included examples of waiters' actions that demonstrated best practice to prevent workplace injury scored well. Responses needed to reflect knowledge of four different aspects of workplace injury prevention so similar answers only scored one mark.

Question 7

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	18	10	23	30	19	2.3

The following were considered aspects that contribute to a positive ambience:

- lighting
- music
- décor
- temperature
- atmosphere
- seating/position.

Students scored well when they could explain the importance of the above aspects to positive ambience. Unfortunately, many students approached this question in a negative way or did not explain the positive features of the ambience factor. For example, 'music – if the music is rock music it will be too loud' or 'lighting – if the lighting is dim the guests may not be able to read the menu'.

Question 8

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	16	8	24	39	13	2.3

Four of:

- check for clogged holes
- check if there is any moisture build up
- check for outside cleanliness/cracks/damaged/polished
- check if they require refilling
- check that the contents have not been mixed up/the appropriate product is in each cruet
- check the plug/screw is secure/grinder is functional
- ensure there are matching sets.

Students who read this question correctly and understood the term 'cruets' generally scored well. Some students did not understand the term and/or included a variety of other pieces of equipment and therefore could not score marks.

Question 9

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	6	4	50	2	38	2.6

Two of:

- to ensure that waiters are aware of the specials, fish of the day (FOD), soup of the day (SOD), special requests/product knowledge

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- to ensure that waiters are aware of changes to the menu/menu items that are not available or limited in portions
- waiters learn which tables or areas they will be servicing/floor plan
- feedback from previous meal times
- instructions for end of service.

Students scored well on this question when they clearly explained two different reasons why attending the pre-service briefing was important.

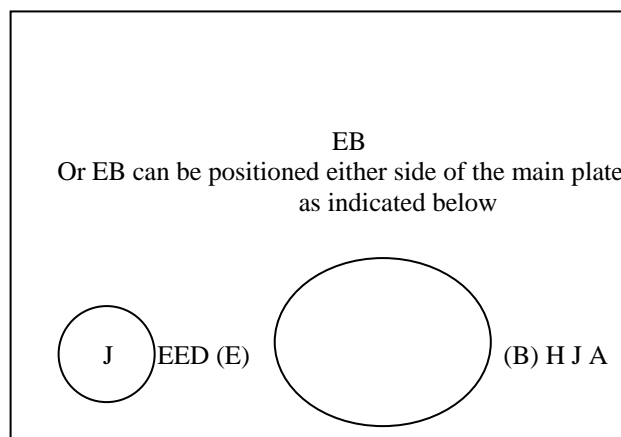
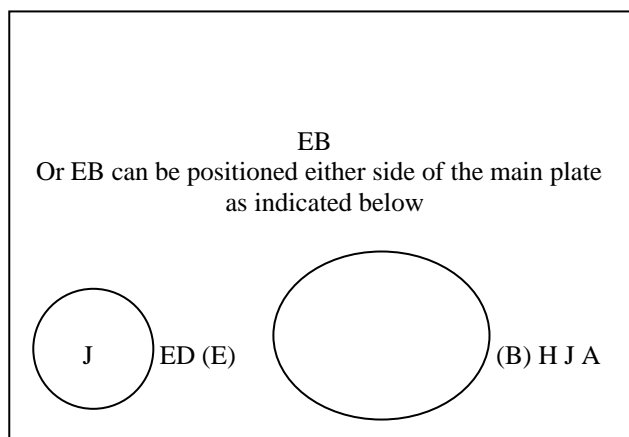
Question 10

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Average
%	7	5	4	10	10	13	13	13	10	7	4	2	2	5.5

Menu item	Correct cutlery item
Chicken consommé with oyster mushrooms	Soup spoon, or soup spoon and entrée fork
Steamed marinated scallops with pickled ginger and braised leek	Entrée fork and entrée knife
Herb-crusted lamb rump with crisp kipfler potatoes, asparagus spears, baby beetroot and red wine onion confit	Main knife and main fork
Caramelised figs with lemon sorbet	Dessert fork and dessert spoon
Handmade liqueur truffles and espresso coffee	No cutlery

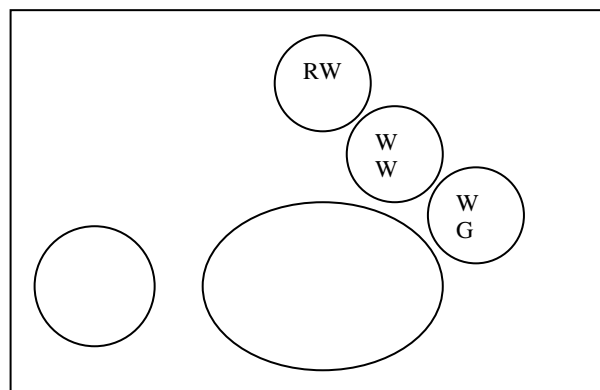
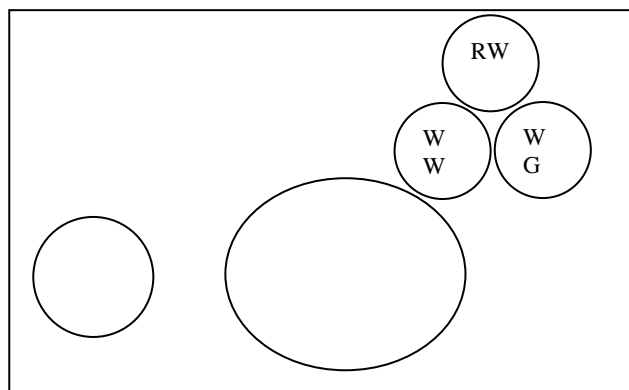
Question 10b.

Two alternative options were accepted.



Question 10 c.

Two alternative options were accepted.



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Question 11

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	Average
%	7	20	39	25	6	3	2.1

- ask for assistance/inform the supervisor
- quickly attend to spilt food to prevent further accidents/clean the area thoroughly/arrange signage/secure the area
- ask the waiter to inform guests of a delay, apologise and confirm their requirements
- reorder food items and inform the chef of the situation
- check appearance for continued service

This was a challenging question for students. It required students to detail the appropriate actions to be taken by the food runner to rectify service requirements. Most students recognised the need to clean up the spilt food and report the incident to the supervisor. However, some responses indicated that many students do not have a good understanding of the responsibilities of the food runner. These responses incorrectly focused on actions that should be carried out by the waiter, such as discussions with the guest about the delay and reordering. Many students did not demonstrate an understanding of the need to appropriately inform the chef or reorder the replacement meals by preparing a new order docket to be sent to the kitchen. Statements such as ‘get the chef to make the meals up again’ did not demonstrate an understanding of kitchen service operations and as such did not score marks. The chef must be informed of the incident, and in addition, a new order docket must be prepared to assist the kitchen during a busy service period. Many students included several apologies to the guest. This was inappropriate and indicates that students misunderstood the advice given in past Assessment Reports regarding customer focus questions.

Question 12

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	8	12	20	21	19	15	5	3

Question 12a.

- collect the dinner plates and cutlery
- collect the side plates and side knives (may use a service plate)
- collect other crockery – salt and pepper, other bowls
- crumbing down the table

Students who carefully read Questions 12a., 12b., and 12c. generally performed well. Students who did not read the question carefully focused on a detailed description of how to clear one guest’s plate and cutlery and usually included information required in Question 12b. In this case, marks could not be awarded.

Question 12b.

Place the forks parallel to each other and slide the knives under the groove in the fork handle to prevent the knives from slipping.

Students who read this question carefully were able to describe this method of securely clearing cutlery.

Question 12c.

Food scraps can be moved onto a separate plate to make the stacking of plates easier.

Many students did not understand the process of the three-plate clearing technique and could not identify its advantages over the two-plate clearing technique.

Question 13

Marks	0	1	Average
%	88	12	0.1

‘Crumbing down’ is carried out after the main course is finished and the side plates and cruets have been removed.

Many students explained that crumbing down was carried out after the main course was finished, but this response was incomplete. The crumbing down procedure is carried out after the side plates, cruets and other items that are no longer required have been removed. Students needed to have included a detailed explanation to score marks.

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Question 14

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	79	12	9	0.3

- Apologise to the customer for the inconvenience and inform them of your action.
- If the table leg was the problem, adjust the leg or cork up the leg by placing a wedge of cork or cardboard under the short leg.
- If the tabletop was the problem, suggest that they move to another table.

Most students did not demonstrate an understanding of how to solve this problem from a customer service perspective. It is essential to apologise to the customer first. The waiter should then inform the customer of the proposed action to rectify the wobbling table. Only after the customer has agreed to the proposed course of action can the waiter attempt to rectify the problem. This gives the customer time to move out of the way so that the waiter can more readily attend to the wobbling table leg without interfering with the customer and their belongings that may be under the table.

Question 15

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	3	6	20	34	27	8	1	3.1

Six of:

- restock the waiters' station
- tables cleared, cleaned and reset
- restaurant area cleaned
- cutlery and glassware cleaned and polished
- table layout adjusted/floor plan/check reservations for table set up
- cruets checked
- replenish stock – coffee station, bar.

The focus of this question was about setting up for the evening shift in the dining room. Most students were able to identify a range of front of house tasks to complete in readiness for the evening shift. Responses that included back of house tasks such as washing dishes could not score marks.

Question 16a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	20	27	30	21	2	1.6

Checks that should be made before processing a credit card for payment include:

- that the establishment accepts this credit card system
- the credit card has not expired
- that the card has been signed
- which account the customer wishes to use for the transaction.

The focus of this question related to the checks required **before** processing the credit card for payment. Many students misinterpreted the question and included checks required after the card had been processed. Responses such as 'check the card is valid' provided insufficient information.

Question 16b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	12	40	37	11	1.5

Final checks to follow when finalising the transaction include:

- check that the credit card transaction is correct and goes to the correct table/guest
- the customer should sign the docket and the signature should be verified with the one on the back of the card
- the customer should complete the total of the amount payable on the credit card transaction receipt, including any tip being paid
- the customer should receive their copy of the completed credit card transaction receipt and have their card returned
- a copy of the bill should be presented to the customer (the bill is the tax invoice)
- the guest should be thanked for their payment.

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Student generally scored well on this question and were able to identify some relevant final checks required when finalising transactions.

Question 17

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	33	39	21	5	1	1

Four of:

- clean and sanitise the pass area/still room/service bench
- assist the waiters with polishing the cutlery
- return the clean cutlery and side plates to the station/waiters' station
- remove rubbish, bottles and cardboard to the refuse area/organise recycling
- bag dirty linen and place at the pick up point.

Many students had difficulty with this question and did not include duties that are carried out by the food runner. Many responses related to tasks that the waiter might carry out in the dining area when clearing and resetting tables.

Question 18

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	8	32	38	18	4	1.8

Elderly people

- may recommend a meal deal
- 'early bird' dinners or one course suggestions with non-alcoholic beverage suggestions

Guest dining on their own

- offer of reading material
- à la carte menu for a single course
- table in the boundaries of the room
- opportunity for brief conversation

Family with small children

- prompt meal service
- something for the children to do while they are waiting
- children's menu/children's special/children's meal deal with a non-alcoholic beverage
- appropriate seating for children/high chair

Small group of businesspeople coming for lunch

- potentially prompt lunch service
- a private table for conversation/quiet area

Large group of young adults celebrating an occasion

- meal and drink deals/meals to share
- split bills
- limited menu, group menu

This question was handled poorly. Students did not understand the different needs presented by a diverse range of client groups. To adequately provide for the needs of clients, the professional waiter must be aware of the service needs of different groups to adequately provide service opportunities. Many students provided responses relating to the service of alcohol only. This was not considered a priority service opportunity for the groups above and was not consistent with current attitudes towards the responsible service of alcohol.

Question 19

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	18	25	39	18	1.6

Three of:

- sugar bowls are clean and dry
- sugar bowls are filled adequately

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- sugar is clump free, good quality and fresh
- sugar is kept covered
- clean service spoons are provided.

Some students had difficulty identifying three factors to be considered when preparing sugar bowls for tea and coffee.

Question 20

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	Average
%	17	19	24	22	15	4	2.1

Five of:

- the coffee is fresh and not stale, correct grind, good quality
- the correct ratio of coffee to water is used
- the plunger is pre-warmed
- the water is at the correct temperature (just off the boil) when making the coffee
- the coffee is left to brew for 2–3 minutes before plunging
- the coffee equipment is thoroughly cleaned before use
- the coffee plunger is in good working order, there are no cracks
- press the plunger down slowly.

Many students had difficulty with this question and could not identify five factors that needed to be considered. Many students did not consider the care or attention to detail that is required when preparing a quality pot of plunger coffee.

Question 21

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	11	12	28	36	13	2.3

Four of:

- fruits and fruit juices
- vegetables and vegetable juices
- dairy products
- cordials and syrups
- soft drinks, plain and flavoured mineral water.

Most students scored well and listed appropriate categories of food products used to make non-alcoholic beverages.

Question 22

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	16	61	23	1.1

Two of:

- consistency of taste/consistent quality
- presentation
- cost control.

Students generally scored well on this question and gave appropriate responses that demonstrated their understanding that consistent quality, taste or presentation was achieved by following recipes correctly.